

Collection of 42 Statements from Republican Members Regarding 9th Circuit Pledge of Allegiance Decision

(Compiled by the House Republican Study Committee)

Statements Included Below:

1. Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL)
2. Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX)
3. Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R-TX)
4. Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI)
5. Rep. John Shadegg (R-AZ)
6. Rep. J.C. Watts (R-OK)
7. Rep. Joseph Pitts (R-PA)
8. Rep. Ernest Istook (R-OK)
9. Rep. Sam Johnson (R-TX)
10. Rep. Jo Ann Davis (R-VA)
11. Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA)
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13. Rep. Richard Pombo (R-CA)
14. Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD)
15. Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC)
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17. Rep. Pete Hoekstra (R-MI)
18. Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL)
19. Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX)
20. Rep. John Hostettler (R-IN)
21. Rep. Bob Riley (R-AL)
22. Rep. Steve Buyer (R-IN)
23. Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA)
24. Rep. Gary Miller (R-CA)
25. Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC)
26. Rep. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)
27. Rep. John Boozman (R-AR)
28. Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R-KS)
29. Rep. Adam Putnam (R-FL)
30. Rep. Robin Hayes (R-NC)
31. Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-CO)
32. Rep. Henry Hyde (R-IL)
33. Rep. John Boehner (R-OH)
34. Rep. Jim Ryun (R-KS)
35. Rep. Wally Herger (R-CA)
36. Rep. John Sullivan (R-OK)
37. Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-MT)
38. Rep. Henry Brown (R-SC)
39. Rep. Van Hilleary (R-TN)
40. Rep. David Vitter (R-LA)
41. Rep. Charlie Norwood (R-GA)
42. Rep. John Doolittle (R-CA)



J. Dennis Hastert
Fourteenth District
Illinois

<http://www.speaker.gov>

Speaker's Press Office

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
WEDNESDAY, June 26, 2002

CONTACT: 202-225-2800
John Feehery or Pete Jeffries

SPEAKER DENNIS HASTERT (R-IL) REMARKS ON PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BEING RULED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

“Obviously, the liberal Court in San Francisco has gotten this one wrong. Of course, we are one nation, under God. The Pledge of Allegiance is a patriotic salute that brings people of all faiths together to share in the American spirit. I strongly believe that parents, teachers and local schools should encourage children to recite the Pledge to start the day, the same way those of us in Congress begin our daily business, not allow a liberal judge to take it away. It’s time for the Senate to move forward and confirm some common-sense jurists.”

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Office of the House Majority Leader

For immediate release --
June 26, 2002

Contact: Terry Holt or Greg Crist
(202) 225-6007

House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX) issued the following statement today after a federal appeals court in San Francisco ruled the Pledge of Allegiance is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion and cannot be recited in schools.

“The Ninth Circuit couldn’t be more wrong on this one. A judge who believes the pledge of allegiance is unconstitutional doesn’t belong on the bench. I hope the court returns all the taxpayer money they have been paid in currency marked, ‘In God We Trust.’

“I’m not ashamed of the pledge of allegiance. In fact, on the eve of the 226th anniversary of our country’s independence, we should celebrate it.”

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For more information visit www.freedom.gov



For Immediate Release
June 26, 2002

Contact: Stuart Roy or Jonathan Grella
Phone: (202) 225-0197

DeLay Expresses Dismay Over Pledge of Allegiance Ruling *Puts God Bless America On Web Site*

WASHINGTON - House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R- Texas) today expressed his dismay over the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that found the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional.

Other rulings put out by this court include allowing those who consider themselves to be a part of the Rastafarian movement to smoke pot in federal areas.

According to the ruling of this court, DeLay noted the following might also be banned as unconstitutional:

- ❑ Our money
- ❑ The Presidential Oath of Office
- ❑ The Supreme Court
- ❑ The United States House of Representatives

“When the President says ‘God bless America’ should he be banned? I stand with the tradition that allows the President to put his hand on the Bible and uphold the constitution. It is sad that at a time when our country is coming together this court is driving a wedge between us with their absurd ruling. As countless American leaders of all political stripes have said before me, God Bless America.”

In response to today’s ruling DeLay is displaying “God Bless America” at the top of his Web site, [<www.majoritywhip.gov>](http://www.majoritywhip.gov) [<<http://www.majoritywhip.gov>>](http://www.majoritywhip.gov), and has encouraged other Members of Congress to do the same.

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U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

www.house.gov/judiciary

News Advisory

For immediate release
Shawn
June 26, 2002

Contact: Jeff Lungren/Terry

202-225-2492

Sensenbrenner Statement on Federal Appeals Court Ruling Pledge of Allegiance Unconstitutional

WASHINGTON, D.C. - House Judiciary Committee Chairman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-Wis.) released the following statement:

"Today the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals treated the word 'God' as a poison pill. Rarely has any court - even the notoriously liberal Ninth Circuit - shown such disdain for the will of the people, an Act of Congress, and our American traditions. What's next, a court ruling taking 'In God We Trust' off of money?

"In truth, today's ruling is the latest in a string of rulings by misguided courts misinterpreting the U.S. Constitution's establishment clause. In this case, children were not compelled to say the pledge and under *West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette*, individuals cannot be compelled to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. We recognize the right of those who do not share the beliefs expressed in the Pledge not to recite the pledge, but this ruling treats religious speech as inherently evil. This is an attempt to remove religious speech from the public arena by those who disagree. In essence, it's a heckler's veto.

"Unfortunately, the continued obstruction by the Senate to appoint common-sense judges only ensures more rulings like today's. I'm confident today's ruling will end up as merely the latest in a long stream of misguided rulings from the Ninth Circuit. We in Congress will do whatever it takes to void this laughable ruling."

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Rep. John Shadegg

Press Release

For Immediate Release:
June 26, 2002

Contact:
John Pappas
202-225-3361
or
202-423-4417

Shadegg Expresses Disappointment with the Ruling of the 9th Circuit Court

WASHINGTON - U.S. Congressman John Shadegg (R-AZ) today expressed his dismay over the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that found the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional.

"I am deeply disappointed over this outrageous court ruling. The Ninth Circuit has clearly misinterpreted the U.S. Constitution. Our Nation's founders expressly prohibited the establishment of a national religion, they did not reject religion as the spiritual underpinning of our Nation. Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance hardly qualifies as establishing a national religion. Following the Court's logic, the Declaration of Independence and our national currency are unconstitutional because they mention God.

"Now, more than ever, our Nation is turning toward God, not away. Rulings such as this one show how far out of touch some federal judges are with the American people. It also illustrates that it is past time for Democrats in the U.S. Senate to move forward and confirm common-sense jurists who will interpret the law instead of substituting their own philosophical beliefs."

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FROM THE OFFICE OF
Representative J. C. Watts, Jr.
Oklahoma, 4th District

NEWS RELEASE | Media Contact: Jeff Mascott (202) 226-9000

Pledge Of Allegiance Ruled Unconstitutional By 9th Circuit

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, Jun. 26— House Republican Conference Chairman J.C. Watts, Jr. (R-Okla.) issued the following statement on the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision to rule the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional:

"The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals is California Dreaming if it thinks it can overturn the Pledge of Allegiance.

"This ruling is a disgrace to the judicial branch of government. We can thank God the insane decisions of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals are usually overturned.

"This decision highlights an alarming need to appoint judges who will not rewrite our Constitution and Pledge of Allegiance. The Senate needs to quit blocking President Bush's judicial nominees and replenish our courts with sane judges."



News from
Congressman Joe Pitts
Sixteenth Congressional District of Pennsylvania

204 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Contact: Gabe Neville, Communications Director 202 225-2411 www.house.gov/pitts

For Immediate Release

June 26, 2002

Rep. Pitts blasts San Francisco pledge ruling

Federal court ruled pledge of allegiance is unconstitutional

Washington—Congressman Joe Pitts (R, PA-16) today excoriated the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for making a mockery of the U.S. Constitution. The court ruled today that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional and may not be recited in public schools in California and eight other western states.

“This court has embarked on a Stalinist purge of all that is not ideologically correct according to its skewed view of the law and of this country. The First Amendment was specifically written to guarantee the right of expression they have robbed our children of today. If this ruling stands, the Constitution is gone and we are now being governed only by unelected despots in robes.”

Congressman Pitts said that this ruling underscores the need to rein in the federal judiciary.

“The Constitution established the judiciary as a co-equal branch of government, not as the final and supreme authority. It is time for Congress and the President to stand up to the courts that have arrogated so much power to themselves. Ultimately, the very survival of democracy in this country will depend on it.”

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Micah Swafford

June 26, 2002

202-225-2132

Istook Defends Pledge of Allegiance Against Court's Attack

Washington, DC -- Today, a U.S. federal appeals court in San Francisco ruled that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional and cannot be recited in public schools.

The author of a proposed school prayer amendment condemned the court ruling. He says it's another reason Congress should approve his amendment, because it protects the Pledge of Allegiance as well as protecting voluntary student prayer.

"I'm appalled, but not surprised," said Oklahoma Congressman Ernest Istook. "The First Amendment was designed to protect religious freedom, but wayward judges like these misuse it to attack religion. Bit-by-bit, the ACLU and its sympathizers are winning their 36-year fight against America's religious freedoms and religious heritage. Only a constitutional amendment, such as I've proposed, will stop them. I hope this news will prompt the House to bring my proposal up for a vote.

"Over 50 years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court said schoolchildren are free either to say the Pledge of Allegiance or not to say it. That's the standard we should follow whether it includes the words 'under God' or not, and it's also the standard we should follow regarding prayer by those students.

"Sure, some people are intolerant; they object to hearing God mentioned at a school or public place, but that doesn't give them the right to censor the rest of us. This ruling shows just how out-of-touch too many judges are, and how they've turned common-sense upside-down. Don't mandate prayer or religious messages, but for heaven's sake don't ban them either!"

Istook is the author of the School Prayer Amendment, HJR 81 (Text printed below), a proposed constitutional amendment that would allow prayer in schools and other expressions of religious freedom on public property. The language reads:

"To secure the people's right to acknowledge God according to the dictates of conscience:

-- Neither the United States nor any State shall establish any official religion, but the people's right to pray and to recognize their religious beliefs, heritage, and traditions on public property, including schools, shall not be infringed.

-- The United States and the States shall not compose school prayers, nor require any person to join in prayer or other religious activity."

Today's 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision seeks to overturn a 1954 act of Congress inserting the phrase "under God" after the words "one nation" in the pledge. The court said the phrase violates the so-called Establishment Clause in the Constitution that requires a separation of church and state.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 26, 2002

Contact: McCall Cameron
202/225-4201

Johnson Blasts CA Court Ruling the Pledge Unconstitutional

Today U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson (3rd Dist.-Texas) released the following statement after a California Court declared the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional because of its reference to God.

Today the Associated Press reported that a "federal appeals court ruled Wednesday that the Pledge of Allegiance is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion and cannot be recited in schools."

According to the AP, "the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a 1954 act of Congress inserting the phrase 'under God' after the words 'one nation' in the pledge. The court said the phrase violates the so-called Establishment Clause in the Constitution that requires a separation of church and state."

"This is unbelievable, unreasonable and un-American.

"How could the Court make such a horrid ruling, especially in the wake of September 11th?

"Americans are more patriotic and more religious than ever. We will not stop sharing our devotion to this great nation. We will say it loud and say it often.

"What's next, taking away apple pie and the Fourth of July?"

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For Immediate Release
Date: June 26, 2002

Contact: Chris Connelly
Phone - 202.225.4261

Davis Appalled by Radical Ruling to Ban Pledge of Allegiance

Judicial decision to ban Pledge of Allegiance in classrooms yet another sign of dangerous Anti-Religious sentiment in the courts

(Washington, DC) – Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis today delivered the following statement regarding the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that the Pledge of Allegiance be banned from classrooms. The Court of Appeals ruled that the phrase "one Nation, under God" is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion, and therefore the Pledge cannot be recited in public school.

"The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling to ban the Pledge of Allegiance is a new all-time low for our Nation's judicial system, and its on-going efforts to purge God from public life," said Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis. "The Pledge of Allegiance is **voluntary** and does not stand as an endorsement of religion. The Pledge stands as an endorsement of patriotism, liberty and justice - the very pillars of moral fortitude that built our great Nation," added Davis.

"As our men and women in uniform fight overseas to protect our rights, as we mourn those who perished in the September attacks, and as we do our best to teach our children values and character, the courts rule that the ultimate recital of patriotism is not allowed in our classrooms. This ruling is disgusting, and an assault on free speech and freedom of religion," said Davis.

"President Eisenhower so accurately summed up the need for the 'under God' phrase in this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."

"This ruling must be overturned," said Davis. "Radical, anti-faith rulings like this are a danger to America," added Davis.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND TO THE REPUBLIC FOR WHICH IT STANDS, ONE NATION UNDER GOD, INDIVISIBLE, WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2002

CONTACT: Stacey Felzenberg (202) 225-2815

CANTOR: IF PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL, SO IS THE MONEY IN YOUR POCKET

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Eric Cantor today released the following statement regarding the federal appeals court ruling declaring the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional.

"This country was founded upon Judeo-Christian ethics and the words 'under God' in the Pledge reaffirm those beliefs. Founding Father George Washington himself added the words 'so help me God' to his Presidential oath and every President has followed his lead since. Today's decision was absolutely ill-conceived, and I hope this ruling will be overturned by the Supreme Court. That phrase transcends any individual religion; it strengthens our spirit as a nation."

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Todd Akin

Second District of Missouri

NEWS

For Immediate Release
June 26, 2002

Contact: Steve Taylor
Phone: (314) 878-0513

Rep. Akin's Statement on Pledge of Allegiance Being Ruled Unconstitutional

Washington, D.C.- Today, a federal appeals court ruled that the Pledge of Allegiance is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion and cannot be recited in schools. Congressman Todd Akin has released the following statement:

"If we were to follow that line of reasoning, we would find our very Declaration of Independence unconstitutional. Congress starts its business every morning with the Pledge of Allegiance. A Member's very oath of office refers to God. It is obvious that we are one nation under God.

"Today's decision is wrong and demonstrates a misunderstanding of our constitution. It confuses freedom of religion with freedom from religion and reflects an attempt by some to create a purely secular state.

"I encourage the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and believe that American's dedication to the tradition will prevail."

Pombo Calls Pledge of Allegiance Decision 'Absurd'

Congressman Richard Pombo today expressed his outrage over the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that found the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional:

"I wonder what else the 9th Circuit Court will try to ban? Our money, that plainly reads 'In God We Trust,' or Congress, which begins every session with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance?"

The fact that this absurd decision has happened at a time when our country has come together as one, and right before our Nation's birthday, is a slap in the face to everyone who has waved a an American Flag, sung God Bless America or performed some other patriotic act since September 11.

This country was founded as One Nation Under God. The separation of church and state is in place to keep the government out of religion, not the other way around."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 26, 2002

CONTACT: Lisa Wright at 202-225-2721 or
Sallie Taylor at 301-694-3030

Pledge of Allegiance Outrage

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Roscoe Bartlett (R-6-MD) said “today’s decision by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals is a ludicrous and factually inaccurate misinterpretation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment. Every one of our nation’s founders is turning over in their graves.”

Bartlett noted that “The key phrase in this Appeals Court decision relies upon separation of church and state that first appeared in the judicial vocabulary in the United States in 1947. By and large, Americans have accepted or acquiesced to this new phrase, though it nowhere appears in the United States Constitution or in the first amendment, where the three words separation, church and state are not even found at all.”

“Actually, those three words first appeared together in another constitution,” Bartlett pointed out. “It is the constitution of the defunct communist United Soviet Socialist Republic. Let me read from article 124.

‘In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the USSR is separated from the state and the schools from the church.’

“The logic behind ‘separation of church and state’ that religion is a private matter that should neither guide nor even be allowed to possibly influence public education, the formation of minds, government legislation, the formation of laws, and judicial rulings on what is legal and just, the maintenance of justice. These are seen as distinctly secular arenas. Religion and faith in God as a living force must be kept out of any public process that is in any way supported by any level of local, State or federal funds because it threatens the rights and liberty or might coerce the minds of nonbelievers.”

“By the twisted and insane logic of this Appeal’s Court Decision, there is only one kind of freedom of speech the First Amendment no longer protects; that is prayer,” said Bartlett. “The Court is simply confused and ignorant about the distinction between religion and God. They’re not and never have been equivalent. Our nation’s founders understood the difference and that’s why they wrote the Establishment Clause.”

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--For Immediate Release--

From the Office of U.S. Congressman Joe Wilson
Representing the Second Congressional District of South Carolina

June 26, 2002

Wilson Statement on Pledge of Allegiance Ruling

Washington, D.C. -- Rep. Joe Wilson, R-SC, today made the following remarks in response to a ruling by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals declaring the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional.

"This ruling is absolutely wrong and completely out of step with Americans. The Pledge is a way for citizens of all faiths to come together, something we should all be celebrating now more than ever," said Rep. Wilson.

"The Pledge of Allegiance is a free expression of patriotism and unity that should be encouraged, not stripped away by a liberal court in San Francisco. If Senate Democrats are listening, we need common-sense judges, and we need them now."

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<http://www.house.gov/joewilson>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2002

CONTACT: Brian Walsh
202-225-2931; (877) 836-1325

Barr Slams "Idiotic" Activist Court Decision *Calls on Judges to Stop Accepting Taxpayer-Funded Paychecks*

WASHINGTON D.C. - U.S. Rep. Bob Barr (GA-7) reacted angrily to today's decision by the activist 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, which found the Pledge of Allegiance to be unconstitutional. Specifically, the Court overturned a 1954 act of Congress inserting the phrase "under God" after the words "one nation" in the pledge. The court said the phrase violates the so-called Establishment Clause in the Constitution that requires a separation of church and state.

"This decision by a liberal, activist court is utterly appalling. It is an affront to the very foundation of our country and an insult to the millions of Americans who have died defending it," Barr said. "I fully expect this outrageous decision will be overturned by the Supreme Court, and in the meantime, call on these liberal judges to stop accepting their taxpayer paychecks as they are no doubt offended by the words 'In God We Trust' on all U.S. currency."

"This unbelievable decision, more so than any other, highlights the importance of approving President's Bush's judicial nominees, which, for many months now, have been blocked by the Democrat-controlled Senate," Barr said. "I wonder what Senator Daschle thinks of this decision because he continues to prevent the consideration of judges who disagree with these liberal activists on the 9th Circuit Court."

Barr, a former federal prosecutor, represents Georgia's Seventh District. He serves on the House Financial Services, Judiciary, and Government Reform Committees.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 26, 2002

FOR MORE INFORMATION, contact:

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OUTRAGEOUS!

Hoekstra responds to Appeals Court decision on Pledge

WASHINGTON - Congressman Pete Hoekstra, R-Holland, issued the following statement after the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional:

"This decision will be recorded as one of the worst cases of judicial activism in the history our nation's courts. In a country where we have allowed prayer to be removed from our schools and allowed school districts to ban the phrase "God Bless America," I must wonder how far some are willing to go to strip our children of the right express their belief in America.

"What's next? Will our motto, "In God We Trust," be ruled unconstitutional? How about the opening prayer before House or Senate session? Perhaps the court will say Congress can no longer have chaplains.

"Beyond any reasonable doubt, this decision is outrageous and must be overturned."

News...

From Congressman Robert Aderholt

Fourth District of Alabama

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 26, 2002

CONTACT: Wade Newton
202-226-7602

WASHINGTON D.C. - - Congressman Robert Aderholt (R-Haleyville) today made the following statement in reaction to a federal appeals court ruling that reciting the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional. The court ruled that the phrase “under God” violates the Constitution’s Establishment clause separating church and state. The Congressman had this to say on the matter:

“I am extremely disappointed that the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has yet again issued a liberal decision – that is nothing less than judicial activism -- by declaring the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional. While I remain confident that the U.S. Supreme Court will overturn this ruling, we have seen this trend of forcing any mention of God or religion from the public square for many years now. Unfortunately, it has taken a ruling such as this for many to understand what is occurring by the federal courts.”

-End-

NEWS FROM CONGRESSMAN KEVIN BRADY

For Immediate Release
June 26, 2002

Contact: Matt Lloyd
(202) 225 - 4901

Brady Statement on Pledge of Allegiance Appeals Court Ruling *Will Put "God Bless America" on Website*

Washington, D.C. - - U.S. Representative Kevin Brady (R-TX) issued the following statement today regarding a ruling by a U.S. Appeals Court in San Francisco that ruled the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional because it crossed the line between separation of church and state:

"This ruling is just nonsense, especially for a nation that turned as one to God following the terrorist attacks of 9-11. I would hope the ruling would be quickly overturned -- and that our children won't be prevented from saying the Pledge of Allegiance at school. This just proves once again that it is past time for the Democratic-controlled Senate to quite stalling and start confirming common sense judges."

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2002

CONTACT: MICHAEL JAHR
202-225-4636

HOSTETTLER STATEMENT ON FEDERAL APPEALS COURT RULING PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE UNCONSTITUTIONAL

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. John Hostettler today issued the following statement on the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision to rule the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional:

"Simply put, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overstepped its jurisdiction. The Constitution gives all legislative authority to Congress, not the courts. Even so, this court chose to turn the First Amendment on its head in order to outlaw the voluntary recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools.

"The First Amendment was designed to prohibit the establishment of a national church, as many European nations had in the 18th Century. Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance clearly does not establish a national church. At the same time, the court ignored the portion of the First Amendment that says the federal government cannot prohibit the free exercise of religion.

"Based on this ruling, daily invocations in courtrooms and Congress must be stopped. Inscriptions on our national monuments, memorials and money must be deleted. Even public instruction on the Declaration of Independence and Constitution would be, ironically, unconstitutional.

"I encourage parents, teachers and school officials to ignore this unconstitutional ruling and continue to instruct their children as they see fit.

"Likewise, I would admonish the Executive Branch to remember the words of Alexander Hamilton in Federalist #78 where he said, 'The judiciary. . . must ultimately depend upon the aid of the executive arm for the efficacy of its judgements.'

"There is nothing efficacious in the decision of the 9th Circuit Court and therefore the opinion should be treated as such - a bad opinion."

News from Congressman Bob Riley

Alabama -- 3rd District

Riley Introduces Pledge of Allegiance Resolution

June 26, 2002

Washington, D.C. -- Alabama Congressman Bob Riley introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives today condemning a federal appeals court decision that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional because of the words "under God."

"I am shocked and outraged by this ridiculous, ignorant and unconstitutional decision," Congressman Riley said. "Now, more than ever, America must embrace the traditions which symbolize our strength and unity. Our flag is a shining symbol of America, and any attempt to declare the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional is not only unpatriotic, it is unconscionable."

Riley's "Sense of Congress" resolution was introduced Wednesday evening and will probably be voted on early next month.

Note: Congressional resolution attached

107TH CONGRESS

2ND SESSION

H. CON. RES. [*will be decided*]

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. RILEY submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on [*will be decided*]

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the Pledge of Allegiance.

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that Congress opposes the ruling of a Federal appeals court that the Pledge of Allegiance is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion and cannot be recited in schools, because the Pledge is a deeply embedded symbol of our nation and the freedoms we hold so dear.

June 26, 2002 (4:25 PM)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2002**

**CONTACT: LAURA ZUCKERMAN
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
(202) 225-5037**

URGENT

Congressman Steve Buyer Issues Statement Regarding Decision by 9th Circuit

Washington, D.C.—Today, in light of the 9th Circuit's decision declaring the "Pledge of Allegiance" unconstitutional, Congressman Steve Buyer issues this statement:

"The 9th Circuit rears its liberal head one more time. In a stunning denouncement of constitutional law, the 9th circuit has once again decided a case in a way that speaks as to whether these judges are reading the same constitution as the rest of the country. It's a bitter disappointment."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: *June 26, 2002* CONTACT: *Michael Harrison (202) 225-5672*

HUNTER STATEMENT REGARDING PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE RULING

Washington D.C. - Congressman Duncan Hunter (CA-52) made the following statement regarding the ruling made today by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional and cannot be recited in public schools:

"The absurdity of this decision speaks for itself," said Congressman Hunter. "Everyday, we in Congress begin our day the same way kids across this nation do, by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. This pledge is more than just a short speech, it is a part of our nation's heritage representing the ideals of our founders and the strength of our character. We recite the Pledge of Allegiance to demonstrate our pride and spirit in a nation that promotes freedom and defends liberty. During this time of war, when we are depending on God's help more than ever, it is more important than ever that our children learn that there is meaning behind the words "one nation under God". I am confident that this decision will be quickly overturned and I think today's action will send a message to the U.S. Senate that our nation needs more judges confirmed that will not only uphold the ideals of America, but exercise common-sense as well."

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PRESS RELEASE

Congressman

Gary G. Miller

41st District, California

For Immediate Release

June 26, 2002

Contact: Deandra Brooks
(202) 225-3201

Congressman Gary Miller (R-CA) issued the following statement today after a federal appeals court in San Francisco ruled the Pledge of Allegiance is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion and cannot be recited in schools.

"When I first heard that a court had ruled the Pledge of Allegiance as unconstitutional, I was dumbfounded; however, this is indicative of the analysis we've come to expect from the Ninth Circuit. Today's ruling has to be the most ridiculous I have ever heard, and the judges of the Ninth Circuit should be embarrassed. I can't wait for the U.S. House of Representatives to begin its legislative business tomorrow - beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance."

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REP. JONES REACTS TO CALIFORNIA'S PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE DECISION

“We must put judges back on the stands who respect our Constitution.”

WASHINGTON, DC - Third District Congressman Walter B. Jones (R-NC) today reacted to the news that the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals had ruled our Nation's Pledge of Allegiance “unconstitutional” on the grounds that the words “Under God” violated the so-called Establishment Clause in the Constitution that requires a separation of church and state.

“This is a sad day for our Nation. To hear that a federal Judge would make this kind of decision breaks my heart,” Congressman Jones said today. “I stand shoulder to shoulder with my colleagues in Congress who believe this decision is wrong.”

“226 years ago, our Nation was founded on the fundamental values of Judeo-Christian principles. I have watched as America has pulled away from those principles, and I believe this decision only furthers our break from the traditions our Founding Fathers held so dear,” Congressman Jones continued today. “If one supports this decision, then he or she must also believe that our currency, our Supreme Court, our House of Representatives, and our Presidential Oath of Office are unconstitutional, since each asserts a belief in God.”

“Decisions like these should remind us why it is so important to stop this partisan hold against 45 of President Bush's judicial nominees. The Judges who President Bush has nominated would never allow this type of nonsense,” Congressman Jones said today. “I am disappointed that Senator Edwards has championed the fight against men like Judge Pickering, who understand our Constitution and would never dream of trying to rewrite elements of our Country that we hold so dear. We must put judges back on the stands who respect our Constitution.”

“We are a Nation founded ‘Under God’ and nothing, not even a federal judge, can do anything to change that.”

For additional information or to schedule an interview with Congressman Walter B. Jones please contact Lanier Swann at (202) 225-3415 or via email at lanier.swann@mail.house.gov.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 26, 2002

<http://www.house.gov/graham/News/pledge.htm>

Graham Statement on Pledge of Allegiance Being Declared Unconstitutional

WASHINGTON -- South Carolina Third District Rep. Lindsey Graham (R-Seneca) today said he strongly disagreed with the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling which deems the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional.

He made the following statement:

"The ruling shows how far certain elements of the judicial branch have gone to declare war on all things related to religion. It is important, now more than ever, that common-sense conservative judges be appointed and confirmed to the federal bench.

"It is my hope and belief this absurd decision will be struck down on appeal. I pledge to do everything in my power to ensure the appeals court ruling banning the Pledge of Allegiance never becomes law.

"The Congress starts every session with the Pledge and a prayer offered by the House chaplain. This practice is good for our nation. If necessary, I will offer a constitutional amendment to ensure Americans can voluntarily say the Pledge in public and private settings without being in violation of the law.

"The reference in the Pledge to being 'one nation under God' is in no way the establishment of religion by the government. If America ever needed God's blessing and guidance, it's now."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2002

Contact: Patrick Creamer
202-225-4301

Rep. Boozman Statement on Court's Pledge of Allegiance Ruling

Calls federal appeals court decision "extremely disappointing"

WASHINGTON, DC - Representative John Boozman (R-AR) issued the following statement on today's decision by a federal appeals court in San Francisco ruling that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional.

"I am extremely disappointed in the court's ruling. The Pledge of Allegiance reflects the values of America and brings together people of different backgrounds in a shared expression of their support for our country. I proudly say it before the start of business in the House of Representatives, just as I proudly said it before every school board meeting in Rogers. It is simply unbelievable to me that a federal court judge wouldn't be able to exercise some common-sense in this matter, but it further highlights the need for the Senate to approve nominees that reflect our nation's core values to the federal courts."

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Please visit www.house.gov/boozman for the latest news from Rep. John Boozman

Tiahrt responds to 'under God' being declared unconstitutional in Pledge of Allegiance

WASHINGTON – U.S. Representative Todd Tiahrt (R-Goddard), responds to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals' decision that the words 'under God' are unconstitutional in the Pledge of Allegiance."

"The federal court's decision today is outrageous," Tiahrt said. "To declare the words 'under God' unconstitutional in our Pledge of Allegiance is to attack the history and moral foundation of our great nation."

"It is a sad day indeed when two judges on a federal court declare 'under God' to be unconstitutional. I find it ironic that the whole of our Declaration of Independence was founded upon the premise that we are endowed by our 'Creator' with unalienable rights, yet this federal court declares 'under God' to be unfit for our public school children."

"It is worth noting that John Jay, our Supreme Court's first Chief-Justice, said, 'The Bible will also inform them that our gracious Creator has provided for us a Redeemer in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed...' It would be worth this federal court's time to read the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bible – three writings all our country's Founders found indispensable."

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Representative Adam H. Putnam
June 26, 2002

Extension of Remarks
Congressman Adam Putnam

Statement in Response to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' Ruling on the Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Speaker, I am fortunate to have many veterans residing in my district. When I heard of the appalling actions of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals -- ruling that the Pledge of Allegiance was unconstitutional -- my thoughts turned to them. We are a nation standing strong today because those heroes pledged their allegiance to America with their lives, their tears and their sacred honor. What must our troops in the field today think?

Our Country came into being through a Declaration of Independence that acknowledged that we are endowed by our Creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This is clearly an acknowledgement in the very founding document of this Nation that we are indeed "one Nation under God."

When I conclude a constituent letter with 'God bless America' is my action unconstitutional? Should that be banned, too? I stand with the tradition that allows the President to put his hand on the Bible, pledge to protect and defend the constitution and conclude his oath with the words of George Washington, "So help me God."

It is sad that at a time when our country is at war and Americans have a renewed sense of patriotism -- and what allegiance to America costs -- this court is driving a wedge between us with their absurd ruling. It is my fervent hope that a common sense reading of the Constitution will eventually prevail and that liberal judges will end their war on religion in America.

As countless American leaders of all political stripes have said before me, God Bless America.

NEWS RELEASE

Congressman Robin Hayes - 8th District, North Carolina

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, June 26, 2002

Contact: Jonathan Felts (202) 226-7486

Statement from Congressman Robin Hayes Regarding 9th Circuit Ruling that the Pledge of Allegiance is Unconstitutional

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Robin Hayes (NC-8) today issued the following statement regarding the 9th Circuit Federal Appeals Court Ruling in San Francisco that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional because it references God.

"As we approach July 4, it is very sad that a federal judge would rule that it is unconstitutional for our school children to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Even by liberal standards, this ruling is ridiculous and cannot be allowed to stand. As we prepare to celebrate 226 years of freedom next week, we should all celebrate freedom and the Pledge of Allegiance.

"There is nothing unconstitutional about the Pledge of Allegiance and I find it deeply offensive that this Judge thinks so. I would hope that all school boards would ignore this wrong decision which is sure to be overturned."

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130 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515 · 137 Union Street South, Concord, NC 28025

**Tancredo Statement Regarding the Pledge of Allegiance Ruled as
Unconstitutional by 9th District Circuit Court of Appeals
*Calls Pledge an "Unconstitutional Endorsement of Religion"***

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Tom Tancredo (R-CO) released the following statement today regarding the 9th District Circuit Court of Appeals' decision to overturn a 1954 ruling that the Pledge of Allegiance is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion and cannot be recited in schools:

"Osama Bin Laden has called our culture corrupt and hedonistic. If this ruling of the 9th District Circuit Court were a true reflection of American opinion, he'd be right. Luckily, it is only the opinion of a hedonistic court.

"I agree with the Speaker, the liberal Court in San Francisco has gotten this one completely wrong. At a critical time in America's history, it's imperative that we encourage all our students to proudly speak the Pledge of Allegiance. I expect this opinion will rise to the level of the Supreme Court. I sincerely hope this will be overturned on appeal, as numerous 9th Court of Appeals' rulings have in the past."

According to the Associated Press, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a 1954 act of Congress inserting the phrase "under God" after the phrase "one nation" in the pledge. The court said the phrase violates the so-called Establishment Clause in the Constitution that requires a separation of church and state. When the pledge is recited in a classroom, a student who objects is confronted with an "unacceptable choice between participating and protesting," the appeals court said.

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FROM THE OFFICE OF

Representative Henry J. Hyde

Illinois, 6th District

NEWS RELEASE | Media Contact: Jennifer Palmer, press secretary
(202) 226-7414

The Pledge of Allegiance Unconstitutional?

What's next, the dollar bill?

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, Jun. 26— Today the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Pledge of Allegiance is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion. In response to that ruling, Congressman Henry Hyde, R-Ill., issued the following statement:

This decision is an embarrassment to the court. History, custom and tradition evidently are unknown quantities to this court. How they propose to erase "In God We Trust" from all our currency will be an interesting project. I hope this decision is speedily reversed.

Note: Congressman Hyde is the chairman of the International Relations Committee and the former chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

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**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2002**

**CONTACT: Dave Schnittger
or Heather Valentine
(202) 225-4527**

**Boehner Statement on 9th Circuit Court of Appeals
Ruling on the Pledge of Allegiance**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today Education & the Workforce Committee Chairman John Boehner (R-OH) issued the following statement in response to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals' ruling that the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance are unconstitutional:

"The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals is the most overturned federal appellate court in the nation, and today's outrageous ruling demonstrates exactly why this is true. As our nation prepares to celebrate its 226th birthday - and as we continue to fight a war to preserve our uniquely American way of life - the 9th Circuit's opinion is not only horribly misguided; it is horribly ill-timed as well.

"The United States Supreme Court begins its sessions with the words 'God save the United States and this honorable court' and the Ten Commandments are displayed in the Court's solemn chamber. Each day, my colleagues in the House and I begin our legislative work with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. And every person in America - including judges sitting on the 9th Circuit - is paid with and spends currency on which the phrase 'In God We Trust' is prominently displayed - with the Supreme Court's blessing, I might add.

"As Chairman of the House Education Committee, I follow with great interest the education our children are receiving. Today's ruling not only affects them because they recite the Pledge of Allegiance each school day, but it also provides them a great lesson on government - and just how foolish it can be at times."

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For Immediate Release

June 26, 2002

CONTACT: Chad Hayward

PHONE: 202-225-6601

Ryun Response to Pledge of Allegiance Ruling

“The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals’ ruling that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional is nothing short of disturbing.

“While our servicemen and women are putting their lives on the line for this country and fighting under our flag, our nation’s school children are suddenly told that they can no longer pledge allegiance to the same symbol. The idea that the phrase, ‘under God’ constitutes state-sponsored religion is absurd. Clearly, the court has ignored the historical foundations of our Republic,” Ryun said.

The Pledge of Allegiance was first published in 1892 in “The Youth’s Companion,” a publication written specifically for youth. On October 12th of that year, American children were encouraged to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to commemorate the quadricentennial of Columbus' arrival. Congress officially recognized the Pledge in 1942, and in 1954 it was amended to include the words, “under God.” Then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower said, “... in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war.”

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Statement of Congressman Wally Herger (CA-2)
On 9th Circuit Court of Appeals Ruling on the Pledge of Allegiance

The ruling of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, located in San Francisco, demonstrates the lengths liberal activist judges will go to promote their anti-American fervor.

Time after time, the Courts have affirmed our national motto, "In God We Trust." And yet because of the ruling of a number of politically motivated radicals in black robes, the mention of God in the Pledge of Allegiance is deemed inappropriate and unconstitutional.

What comes next? Will the courts order the recall hundreds of millions of \$1 bills because of the mention of God? What about \$5's? What about \$20's?

I firmly believe this absurd ruling to be yet another attempt to subvert the religious liberty that gave birth to America. A personal affront to our national heritage, I will strongly oppose and work to overturn

NEWS

From the Office of John
Sullivan
Member of Congress



106 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Phone: 202-225-2211
Fax: 202-225-9187

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2002

CONTACT: Jake Yunker
(202) 225-2211

CONGRESSMAN JOHN SULLIVAN RELEASES STATEMENT ON PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BEING RULED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman John Sullivan today released the following statement regarding the Pledge of Allegiance being ruled unconstitutional.

Congressman Sullivan's Statement

Today, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals of the United States failed to uphold the basic common-sense principles of the Founders of our nation. The Pledge of Allegiance is a patriotic salute that unites people of all faiths in recognizing the presence of a Higher Being.

For more than 200 years, the United States has been the bastion of religious freedom in the world. The words "under God" are as essential to the Pledge of Allegiance as the stars and stripes are to the United States Flag.

The Establishment Clause in the First Amendment to the Constitution prohibits the establishment of religion. Liberal judges have construed it to mean prohibition of *all things religious*. This is not the intent of the founding fathers, or the will of the American people.

At a time when our country's fighting to establish freedom throughout the world, attacks from liberal judges are trying to take away these most sacred values we hold as Americans.

This is why it is time for the Senate to move forward and confirm some sensible jurists who can uphold the laws of the land.

516 Cannon HOB

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www.house.gov/rehberg/

-- Breaking News / Satellite Feed --

June 27, 2002

**REHBERG DEFENDS PLEDGE, SLAMS NINTH CIRCUIT'S "RUNAWAY EXTREMISM"
Congress Considers Resolution Today Condemning Ninth Circuit Court's Ruling**

WASHINGTON - Montana's Congressman, U.S. Representative Denny Rehberg (R-MT), sponsored legislation last night expressing the outrage felt by many in Congress over the Ninth Circuit Court's ruling that bans the pledge of allegiance.

House Resolution 459 expresses the sense of the House that: (1) the Pledge of Allegiance, including the phrase "One Nation, under God," reflects the historical fact that a belief in God permeated the Founding and development of our Nation; (2) the Ninth Circuit's ruling is inconsistent with the U.S. Supreme Court's First Amendment jurisprudence that the Pledge of Allegiance and similar expressions are not unconstitutional expressions of religious belief; (3) the phrase "One Nation, under God," should remain in the Pledge of Allegiance; and (4) the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals should agree to rehear this ruling en banc in order to reverse this constitutionally infirm and historically incorrect ruling. The House is scheduled to consider H.Res. 459 under suspension of the rules today.

This morning, following the Pledge of Allegiance on the House floor, Rehberg delivered an impassioned speech railing against the Ninth Circuit's ruling. He will discuss the House's actions today via satellite feed.

From Rehberg's Speech today: "One Nation Under God. Mr. Speaker, these four solemn words form the very backbone of our great democracy. In one short breath, these patriotic words, and the pledge of allegiance from which they are proudly spoken, have guided the American experiment in democracy for generations. Yesterday, through a gross example of judicial activism, two federal judges stripped these words from the American vocabulary. It's bizarre decisions like this that have given the Ninth Circuit the dubious distinction of being the most overturned court in the nation. In one year alone, 27 of the Ninth Circuit's 28 rulings were over turned. This most recent decision further brings to light the desperate need for the United States Senate to quit blocking President Bush's judicial nominees and supply our courts with qualified judges that will interpret, not re-write, the constitution. I hope the Senate is listening. Mr. Speaker, I do pledge allegiance to the flag ! and I am proud to say that despite the beliefs of the Ninth Circuit, this is still one nation under god."

Contact: [Dallas Lawrence](#), Communications Director

HENRY E. BROWN, JR
1ST District, South Carolina

COMMITTEES
Transportation & Infrastructure
Budget
Veterans' Affairs

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4001

For Immediate Release

June 26, 2002

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CONGRESSMAN BROWN DECRIES PLEDGE DECISION

Washington, DC – Congressman Henry Brown made the following statement in opposition to today's ruling by the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals declaring the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional.

Congressman Brown stated:

"I am appalled at today's decision declaring the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional. Just as I fought the ACLU when they protested displaying 'God Bless America' on school marquees, I will fight this ridiculous ruling.

This decision demonstrates once again just how important it is to get some common-sense federal judges appointed and confirmed. Certain liberal elements within the judicial branch have gone too far with this ruling and I will do everything in my power to ensure this phrase is not banned from the Pledge of Allegiance.

The phrase 'one nation under God' in no way establishes a religion under the government. The federal government argued that the content of this phrase was minimal and I fully expect the US Supreme Court to agree with that assessment.

Now, more than ever, Americans need God's blessing. Join me in fighting this decision. Thank you and God Bless America!"

Congressman Brown represents the First District of South Carolina, which includes all, or portions of, Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester, Georgetown and Horry counties.

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Congressman
Van Hilleary
Tennessee's Fourth Congressional District

NEWS RELEASE

www.house.gov/hilleary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, June 26, 2002

CONTACT: Michael Goode

202.225.6831

Hilleary statement on Pledge of Allegiance ruling

WASHINGTON, DC – The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled today that the Pledge of Allegiance cannot be recited in schools. The court held that the words “under God” violate the Constitution.

The 9th Circuit is the largest of the 13 federal court circuits. It has jurisdiction over Alaska, Arizona, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and the Northern Mariana Islands.

Rep. Van Hilleary issued the following statement in response to the court’s ruling:

“The 9th Circuit Court’s decision is outrageous. Three liberal judges who do not share our values have forbidden schoolchildren from reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

“It is especially offensive coming just before the Fourth of July. The Declaration of Independence refers to God four times. Are these judges going to ban it too?”

“At a time of war, Americans need to be united. Our soldiers are scattered across the globe defending America against terrorism. The Pledge has strengthened our resolve, binding us together as a nation for over a century. Reciting its words reminds us that freedom is never free and allows us to pay tribute to the men and women who are currently in harm’s way defending our freedom.

Americans from Washington and Lincoln to Roosevelt and Reagan have all acknowledged the importance of Providence to our country. The House of Representatives begins each day with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Our schoolchildren should be able to expect no less.

This is another attempt by liberal judges to legislate from the bench by forcing the values of Berkley, California on everyone else. It is a perfect example of why Senate Democrats should quit stalling and confirm President Bush’s nominees to the federal courts.”

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For immediate release
June 26, 2002

Contact: Tonya Newman
(202) 225-3015

Vitter expresses outrage over court decision on pledge

(Washington, D.C.) — U.S. Rep. David Vitter expressed outrage today as one of America's most beloved and revered symbols, the Pledge of Allegiance, was declared unconstitutional by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

"This decision is ridiculous," Vitter said. "I cannot believe this court would disparage the pledge and the flag, the symbols of what we are fighting for in this time of war."

Soon after the ruling was announced, Vitter joined many of his House colleagues to recite the pledge on the House steps. Also, Vitter has cosponsored the resolution that will soon come before the House to condemn the decision.

"The Supreme Court has overturned an astonishing number of cases from the 9th Circuit," Vitter added. "I am hopeful this one will soon join that list."

NEWS RELEASE

Congressman Charlie Norwood, 10th District, Georgia

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June 26, 2002: For immediate Release

Norwood Responds to ‘Pledge of Allegiance’ Ruling

(Washington, DC) – Congressman Charlie Norwood (R-GA) reacted to today’s ruling by the federal appeals court in San Francisco with dismay. This afternoon the Ninth Circuit court announced that the Pledge of Allegiance is an unconstitutional endorsement of religion and cannot be recited in schools.

“This is a ridiculous ruling by San Francisco’s liberal court,” says Congressman Norwood. “We’re sending an awful message to our children on the cusp of celebrating our nation’s independence. There is nothing venomous in the Pledge—Congress begins its business every day by reciting it. This is the kind of stuff that only weakens American’s confidence in our judicial system.”

“I think it’s about time Mr. Daschle and Co. confirm some common-sense jurists. And a word to our schools: ignore this.”

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For Immediate Release
June 26, 2002

Contact: Greg Orlando
(916) 786-5560

Doolittle Disgusted by 9th Circuit Ruling on Pledge of Allegiance

“A slap in the face to our country, that will not stand”

Washington, D.C. -- Yesterday, in an stunning decision, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional because it describes the United States as “one Nation, under God.” In reversing a 1954 action of Congress, the court opined that the pledge, which the vast majority of Americans have recited since they were in grade school, was an official endorsement of monotheism and thus a violation of the First Amendment prohibition against the establishment of state religion.

“This outrageous opinion, tortured in its logic and outwardly offensive, is a slap in the face to our country, particularly at a time when our troops overseas are defending the very freedoms, rights and privileges that our flag represents, said Rep. John Doolittle (R-Rocklin). Over the years, I have grown accustomed to the liberal opinions of the 9th Circuit, but this time it has truly outdone itself.”

The court ruling would take effect in 60 days, pending the government’s appeal. Nine states would be affected in all, including the schoolchildren who reside in Doolittle’s northern California congressional district. “I strongly urge the Department of Justice to ask the 9th Circuit to reconsider its case, or if necessary take the matter directly to the Supreme Court, Doolittle said. “Either way, this decision will not stand. The irrefutable fact is that despite the egregious efforts of liberals to extricate all things religious from American life, we always have – and will always remain – a religious nation.”

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